READINGS FROM GREAT AUTHORS

READINGS FROM GREAT AUTHORS

Arranged for Responsive or Other Use in Churches, Schools, Forums, Homes, Etc.

BY

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES
HARVEY DEE BROWN
HELEN EDMUNDS REDDING
THEODORA GOLDSMITH



NEW YORK
DODD, MEAD AND COMPANY
1919

TO

THE GOLDEN MEMORY OF

THE PROPHET SEERS
OF ALL THE YEARS

THIS BOOK IS HUMBLY DEDICATED

PREFACE

I

This book had its origin in the religious experience and inquiry of a small group of persons in the Church of the Messiah, New York City.

For several years it has been my practise, at the Sunday morning services of worship, to read scripture passages chosen not merely from the Bible but from the secular literature of ancient and modern times. As I look over my records, I discover that I have read from authors as remote — and pagan! — as Buddha, Lao-Tse, Thucydides and Seneca, and as recent as H. G. Wells, Romain Rolland and Woodrow Wilson; while between these two extremes appear the golden names of the seers and prophets of all the ages past. From such custom, my people have become thoroughly familiar with the idea that the Christian Bible is but a single volume in a vast library of sacred writings. They hold, with James Russell Lowell, that

> "Slowly the Bible of the race is writ,
> And not on paper leaves, or leaves of stone.
> Each age, each kindred, adds a verse to it,
> Texts of despair or hope, of joy or moan.
> While rolls the sea, while mists the mountains shroud,
> While thunder's surges burst on cliffs of cloud,
> Still at the prophets' feet the nations sit."

At these same services at our church, however, minister and congregation have read together each Sunday, "responsive selections" taken exclusively from the Book of Psalms!

It was inevitable that the discrepancy between this practise and the one noted above, should sooner or later become evident to minds alert at once to consistency of faith and the deeper and truer harmonies of worship. If we chose our scripture lessons from a great variety of sources, why should we confine our responses to a single source, however noble? If the whole Bible was inadequate for the use of the pulpit, how

could the single Book of Psalms be adequate for the joint use of pulpit and pew? The Psalms, majestic in style and exalted in thought, are some of them to be numbered among the supreme religious poems of all time. Repeated use of them, however, is monotonous. Furthermore, their content is necessarily beset by the limitations of the time and place which produced them. This is especially conspicuous in their expression of individual as contrasted with social experience. The predominant religious note of our time is that of spiritual fellowship and democracy. More and more are we learning to find the reality of God in the fact of comradeship, and the work of God in the right adjustment of all human relations. But of this the Psalms know practically nothing. Hence the need of an extension of responsive as well as scripture readings; and an application to the one as to the other, of the emancipating doctrine of a universal and perpetual revelation.

Considerations such as these led to the first steps which mark the beginning of this book. As an initial experiment, a few poems were taken from the "Gitanjali" of Sir Rabindranath Tagore — written, by the way, as though for the express purpose of responsive reading — and tested at one of the Sunday morning services. A bolder venture was that of arranging selections from the writings of Robert Louis Stevenson. Encouraging results led to still further undertakings, and finally induced the organization of a committee to prepare a definite collection of readings. Many weeks of happy study and labor have produced this little volume, which is herewith commended not merely to the congregation of a single church, but to the general public.

II

In looking back upon our work, my associates and I are most acutely conscious of the obstacles which we encountered, and which we have tried as best we could to overcome. We believe, in order that "the quality of mercy" in our critics may not be "strained," that some statement of these difficulties should here be set down. Furthermore, we are hopeful that this book, at the best an experiment, may lead to other undertakings along the same line, and we would give such help to our successors as we can.

The choice of authors was our first problem. Some of those

whom we most desired to include, as for instance, Plato and John Stuart Mill, proved unusable because of a literary style or method ill-adapted to our purpose. Others entirely satisfactory in these respects, were unacceptable because of their spiritual viewpoint, or the doctrinal nature of their teachings. St. Augustine is here an example. The committee was a unit in believing that the readings should be elevated in diction, and so far as possible expressive of the more radical and therefore prophetic aims of religious idealism. Nothing could be admitted which was unsuitable in form, or inconsistent with the spirit of man at its best and highest. Not all of the authors finally agreed upon are acceptable either to myself or to any one of my associates. Each of us, working alone, would have produced a somewhat different list. We are agreed, however, that the readings as a whole are a not unfair expression of our aims.

But we were concerned not merely with authors, but with topics. On the one hand, there were certain subjects, especially those expressive of the social aspects of religion, which we felt must be treated in our readings. On the other hand, we must tolerate no "vain repetitions," for the sake of piling up great names. More than one author was chosen not because of personal fame, but because he presented, in just the way we wanted it presented, some one indispensable theme. So also there were several great authors who were rejected because their words would have served only to duplicate, however nobly, the testimonies of other men already accepted. Ours was the task of preparing simultaneously two lists — authors and subjects — each one of which should be satisfactory quite apart from any relation to the other. The troubles involved are perhaps not unlike those of the man who must fit

". . . perfect music unto noble words."

This task completed, other difficulties faced us. The selections from each author must not aggregate more than five or six hundred words, or be divided into more than some thirty or forty separate sentences or paragraphs — facts which made it necessary to exclude, in the case of such authors as Tennyson and Browning, many of the "familiar quotations" from their writings. These selections must set forth, to a high degree of accuracy and adequacy, some part at least of the

author's distinctive contribution to religious thought, and thus do him no injustice. The sentences must be so grouped as to be even in number, and show continuity of thought and mounting elevation of style and sentiment. Unusual words and difficult phrasing must be assigned to the leader and not to the people. The leader must in every case initiate the thought, and the people complete it. In the beginning must be struck the keynote, and at the end the "grand Amen."

That we have conquered such difficulties as these, we cannot claim. We have laboured untiringly, however, and we hope not without some measure of success. One thing we have especially tried to do — and that is to keep faith with the writers whose words we have used. Great freedom in the matter of omissions, rearrangements, punctuation, and the occasional insertion of connectives or substantives (indicated in each case by brackets), was inevitable. Only on these conditions could the work be done at all! But we have made no other alterations or substitutions. The words printed in this book are those written by the authors.

III

In closing, may I emphasize that the readings are the joint work of those whose names appear upon the title page of this book. Ours has been a co-operative undertaking, and the result constitutes a mutual responsibility.

Thanks are herewith extended to the publishers who have so kindly permitted us to use copyrighted material. Proper acknowledgment has been made in each case in the text.

June 1, 1918. JOHN HAYNES HOLMES.

CONTENTS

"Everything that is true, is God's word, whoever may have said it."— *Ulrich Zwingli.*

READINGS FROM GREAT AUTHORS

AMERICA

Abraham Lincoln

I

We are a mighty nation and as we run our memory back over the pages of history, we find a race of men whom we claim as our fathers.

They were iron men and we understand that by what they did, it has followed that the degree of prosperity which we enjoy has come to us.

They were pillars of the temple of liberty; and now that they have crumbled away, that temple must fall unless we, their descendants, supply their places with other pillars hewn from the solid quarry of sober reason.

Passion has helped us, but can do so no more. It will in the future be our enemy. Reason must furnish all the materials for our future support and defense.

They meant to set up a standard maxim for free society, which should be familiar to all, and revered by all; constantly looked to, constantly laboured for, constantly approximated, and thereby constantly spreading its influence and augmenting the happiness and value of life to all people everywhere.

It was the sentiment in the Declaration of Independence which gave liberty not only to the people of this country, but hope to all the world for all future time.

Let us readopt the Declaration of Independence, and with it the practices and policy which harmonize with it.

Let all Americans, let all lovers of liberty everywhere, join in the great and good work.

II

Many free countries have lost their liberties, and ours may lose hers; but if she shall, be it my proudest plume, not that I was the last to desert, but that I never deserted her.

This country, with its institutions, belongs to the people who inhabit it.

I look to the great American people and to that God who has never forsaken them. The result is not doubtful. We shall not fail.

If we stand firm, we shall not fail.

Wise counsels may accelerate and mistakes delay it; but sooner or later the victory is sure to come.

Still let us not be over-sanguine of a speedy final triumph. Let us diligently apply the means, never doubting that a just God in his own good time will give us the rightful result.

Neither let us be slandered from our duty by false accusations against us, nor frightened from it by menaces of destruction to the government, nor of dungeons to ourselves.

Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith let us to the end dare to do our duty as we understand it.

With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in.

To do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.

III

Why should there not be a patient confidence in the ultimate justice of the people?

Is there any better or equal hope in the world?

Years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

It is for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us, that we here highly resolve that the dead shall not have died in vain.

That this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom.

And that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

SELF-RELIANCE

Ralph Waldo Emerson

I

Ineffable is the union of man and God in every act of the soul.

The simplest person who in his integrity worships God, becomes God.

As there is no screen or ceiling between our heads and the infinite heavens, so is there no bar or wall in the soul where man ceases and God begins.

Man is conscious of a universal soul within his individual life, wherein, as in a firmament, Justice, Truth, Love and Freedom, arise and shine.

We live in succession, in divisions, in parts, or particles;

Meantime within is the soul of the whole, the universal beauty, the eternal One.

When it breathes through his intellect, it is genius;

When it breathes through his will, it is virtue;

When it flows through his affection, it is love.

Let man learn the revelation, that the highest dwells with him, that the sources of nature are his own.

II

If a man claims to know and speak of God, and carries you backward to the phraseology of some old mouldered nation in another country, in another world, believe him not.

Is the acorn better than the oak, or the parent than the child?

Whence, then, this worship of the past? The centuries are conspirators against the sanctity and authority of the soul.

We shall not always set so great a price on a few texts or a few lives.

The soul degrades the past; it turns riches to poverty, all reputation to a shame.

It confounds the saint with the rogue, shoves Jesus and Judas equally aside.

Ask not for the great or the remote. See to it only that thyself is here.

God is one and omnipresent; here or nowhere is the whole fact.

III

Whoso would be a man, must be a non-conformist.

Wherever a man comes, there comes revolution.

Society everywhere is in conspiracy against the manhood of every one of its members.

Let a man take reputation and life in his hands, and dare the gibbet and the mob by the truth of his speech, and rectitude of his behaviour.

It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinion;

It is easy in solitude to live after our own.

But the great man is he who, in the midst of the crowd, keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude.

Great men have always done so, betraying their perception that the absolutely trustworthy was seated at their heart.

Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind.

Abide in the simple and noble regions of thine own life.

Trust thyself.

Every heart vibrates to that iron string.

There is at this moment for you an utterance brave and grand as that of the chisel of Phidias or the pen of Dante.

Yourself, a new-born bard of the Holy Ghost, cast behind you all conformity and acquaint man at first hand with Deity.

O friend, never strike sail to a fear!

Come into port greatly, or sail with God the seas!

FRIENDSHIP

Ralph Waldo Emerson

I

The laws of friendship are great, austere and eternal, of one web with the laws of nature and of morals.

Love, which is the essence of God, is not for levity, but for the total worth of man.

There are two elements that go to the composition of friendship, each so sovereign that I can detect no superiority in either. One is Truth.

A friend is a person with whom I may be sincere.

The other element in friendship is Tenderness.

When a man becomes dear to me I have touched the goal of fortune.

The essence of friendship is a total magnanimity and trust.

Friendship is for aid and comfort through all the relations and passages of life and death.

It is fit for serene days, and graceful gifts, and country rambles;

But also for rough roads and hard fare, ship-wreck, poverty, and persecution.

We are to dignify to each other the daily needs and offices of man's life, and embellish it by courage, wisdom and unity.

So that a friend may well be reckoned the masterpiece of nature.

II

The only way to have a friend is to be (a friend).

In the last analysis, love is only the reflection of a man's own worthiness from other men.

It is thought a disgrace to love unrequited, but the great will know that true love cannot be unrequited.

We walk alone in the world. Friends such as we desire are dreams and fables.

But a sublime hope cheers ever the faithful heart that elsewhere souls are now acting, enduring, and daring, which can love us and which we can love.

And when we are finished men, we shall grasp heroic hands in heroic hands.

What is so great as friendship, let us carry with what grandeur we can.

Let us be silent, so we may hear the whisper of the gods.

III

Happy is the house that shelters a friend!

Happier, if he knows the solemnity of that relation and honours its laws!

He who offers himself a candidate for that covenant comes up like an Olympian, to the great games, where the first born of the world are competitors.

He proposes himself for contests where Time, Want, Danger, are in the lists.

The gifts of fortune may be present or absent, but all the speed in that contest depends on intrinsic nobleness, and the contempt of trifles.

Friendship, like the immortality of the soul, is too good to be believed.

To be capable of that high office, requires great and sublime parts.

Approach your friend with an audacious trust in the truth of his heart.

Wait until the necessary and everlasting overpowers you, until day and night avail themselves of your lips.

Wait, and thy soul shall speak.

THE GREAT CITY[1]

Walt Whitman

I

A great city is that which has the greatest men and women.

If it be a few ragged huts, it is still the greatest city in the whole world.

II

The place where a great city stands is not the place of stretch'd wharves, docks, manufactures, deposits of produce merely,

Nor the place of ceaseless salutes of new-comers or of the departing,

Nor the place of the tallest and costliest buildings, or shops selling goods from the rest of the earth,

Nor the place of the best libraries and schools,

Nor the place where money is plentiest,

Nor the place of the most numerous population.

Where the city stands with the brawniest breed of orators and bards,

Where the city stands that is belov'd by these, and loves them in return and understands them,

Where no monuments exist to heroes but in the common words and deeds,

Where the slave ceases and the master of slaves ceases,

Where outside authority enters always after the precedence of inside authority,

[1] Reprinted by permission of Walt Whitman's publisher, David McKay, from "Leaves of Grass."

Where the citizen is always the head and the ideal,

Where the children are taught to be laws to themselves, and to depend on themselves,

Where women walk in public processions in the streets the same as the men,

Where they enter the public assembly and take places the same as the men,

Where the city of the faithfulest friends stands,

Where the city of the cleanliness of the sexes stands,

Where the city of the healthiest fathers stands,

Where the city of the best-bodied mothers stands,

There the great city stands.

III

I dream'd I saw a city invincible to the attacks of the whole of the rest of earth.

I dream'd that was the new city of Friends.

Nothing was greater than the quality of robust love, seen every hour in the actions of men of that city,

And in all their looks and words.

IV

Come, I will make the most splendid race the sun ever shone upon, with the love of comrades,

With the life-long love of comrades.

I will make inseparable cities with their arms about each other's necks, by the love of comrades,

By the manly love of comrades.

I will establish in the Mannhatta and in every city of these States inland and seaboard, and in the fields and woods,

The institution of the dear love of comrades, the attraction of friend to friend, of city for city and land for land.

THE SOUL [1]

Walt Whitman

I

(I) looked at the objects of the universe (and) I find there is no one, nor any particle of one, but has reference to the soul.

The soul, forever and forever — longer than soil is brown and solid — longer than water ebbs and flows.

Lo! keen-eyed towering science, as from tall peaks the modern overlooking;

Yet again, lo! the soul, above all science!

For it has history gather'd like husks around the globe.

For it the entire star-myriads roll through the sky.

For it the partial to the permanent flowing.

For it the real to the ideal tends.

For it the mystic evolution, not the right only justified, what we call evil also justified;

Forth from their masks, from craft and guile and tears, health to emerge, and joy, joy universal.

II

Whoever you are, you are he or she for whom the earth is solid and liquid.

You are he or she for whom the sun and moon hang in the sky.

Whoever you are, the divine ship sails the divine sea for you.

[1] Reprinted by permission of Walt Whitman's publisher, David McKay, from "Leaves of Grass."

The whole theory of the universe is directed unerringly to one single individual — namely, to you.

For none more than you are the present and the past.

For none more than you is immortality.

I open my scuttle at night and see the far sprinkled systems expanding, outward and outward and forever outward,

And I say, "Let your soul stand cool and composed before a million universes."

III

Greater than stars or suns, bounding, O soul, thou journeyest forth,

To that which was endless, as it was beginningless;

To undergo much, tramps of days, rests of nights;

To know the universe itself as a road, as many roads for travelling souls.

Whoever you are, come forth! or man or woman, come forth!

Not I, nor any one else can travel that road for you, you must travel it for yourself.

Each man to himself and each woman to herself, is the word of the past and present, and the true word of immortality.

No one can acquire for another — not one; no one can grow for another — not one.

The earth shall surely be complete to him or her who shall be complete.

The earth remains jagged and broken only to him or her who remains jagged and broken.

IV

From this hour I ordain myself loos'd of limits and imaginary lines.

Henceforth I ask not good-fortune, I myself am good-fortune.

I inhale great draughts of space; the east and the west are mine, and the north and the south are mine.

I am larger, better than I thought, I did not know that I held so much goodness.

Joyous we launch out on trackless seas, carolling free, singing our song of God.

For we are bound where mariner has not dared to go, and we will risk the ship, ourselves, and all.

O daring joy, but safe! are they not all seas of God?

O my brave soul! O farther, farther, farther sail!

THE FREE SOUL

William Ellery Channing

I

One sublime idea has taken strong hold of my mind. It is the greatness of the soul, its divinity, its union with God.

I cannot but pity the man who recognizes nothing godlike in his own nature.

I see the marks of God in the heavens and the earth, but how much more in a liberal intellect, in magnanimity, in unconquerable rectitude, in a philanthropy which forgives every wrong, and never despairs of human virtue.

I do and I must reverence human nature; nothing will disturb my faith in its godlike powers and tendencies.

I bless it for its kind affections, for its strong and tender love.

I honour it for its struggles against oppression, its achievements in science and art, its examples of heroic and saintly virtue.

II

The greatness of the soul is especially seen in freedom of will and moral power.

Man is a free being, created to form himself, and to decide his own destiny.

Encompassed by a thousand warring forces, man is endued by God with power to contend with all, and to perfect himself by the conflict.

The greatest man is he who resists the sorest temptations from within and without, and chooses the Right with invincible resolution.

III

I call that mind free which masters the senses, which passes life not in asking what it shall eat or drink, but in hungering, thirsting, and seeking after righteousness.

I call that mind free which does not copy the past nor live on old virtues, but forgets what is behind and rejoices to pour itself forth in fresh exertions.

I call that mind free which is not passively framed by outward circumstances, which is not swept away by the torrent of events, but acts from an inward spring, from immutable principles which it has deliberately espoused.

I call that mind free which protects itself against the usurpations of society, does not cower to human opinion, and feels itself accountable to a higher tribunal than man's.

I call that mind free which jealously guards its intellectual rights, calls no man master, contents itself with no hereditary faith, receives new truth as an angel from heaven, and, while consulting others, inquires still more of the oracle within itself.

I call that mind free which sets no bounds to its love, recognizes in all human beings the image of God, and offers itself up a willing victim to the cause of mankind.

I call that mind free which, through confidence in God, has cast off all fear but that of wrong-doing, which no menace or peril can enthrall, and possesses itself though all else be lost.

I call that mind free which, conscious of its affinity with God, passes the bounds of time and death, and finds inexhaustible power in immortality.

IV

Such is the spiritual freedom which Christ came to give.

It consists in self-control, in the enlargement of thought and affection, in the unrestrained action of our best powers.

It is the nurse of intellectual and moral vigour.

The soul, viewed in this light, should fill us with awe.

It is an immortal germ which contains now within itself what endless ages are to unfold.

It is truly an image of the infinity of God.

JUSTICE

Theodore Parker

I

Justice is the law of conscience; it is moral temperance in the world of men.

Justice is the keynote of the world, and all else is ever out of tune.

Justice keeps right relations between men; one man, however little, must not be sacrificed to another, however great.

Justice holds the balance between nation and nation, for a nation is but a larger man.

Justice is the regulator between men and God; it is God's constant mode of action in the moral world.

Justice is the common human bond. I am to do justice, and demand it of all.

II

Man naturally loves justice for its own sake;

As the mind loves truth and beauty, so conscience loves the right.

Men who think have an ideal justice better than the things about them.

Here are the needy who ask not gold nor bread, but sympathy, respect and counsel.

Here are the beggars and paupers, a reproach to our civilization.

Here are the drunkards, the criminals, the abandoned, sometimes the foe, but far oftener the victim, of society.

Every almshouse shows that the churches have not done their duty.

Every jail is a monument on which is writ in letters of iron that we are still heathens.

The gallows, black and hideous, lifts its arm, a sign of our infamy, an index of our shame.

And war — the worst form of evil!

Shall justice fail and perish out of the world of men?

Shall wrong continually endure?

Injustice cannot stand. No armies, no alliance, can hold it up.

The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.

III

Justice is the ideal of man, the rule of conduct writ in the nature of mankind.

But the ideal must become actual, God's thought a human thing.

You and I can help forward the work.

We may prepare the way for the republic of righteousness, the democracy of justice that is to come.

God will not disdain to use our prayers, our self-denial, and the little atoms of justice that personally belong to us, to establish his mighty work — the development of mankind.

All the justice we mature shall bless us here; and at our death, we leave it added to the common store of humankind.

IV

Men and women, the duties of the world are on you.

God confides to our hands the ark which holds the treasure of the ages.

THE SOUL'S HORIZON [1]

James Russell Lowell

God is in all that liberates and lifts;

In all that humbles, sweetens, and consoles.

A mystery of purpose gleaming through the secular confusions of the world,

Whose will we darkly accomplish, doing ours.

Sometimes at waking, in the street sometimes, or on the hillside, always unforewarned,

Man sees a grace of being finer than himself, that beckons and is gone.

O Power, more near my life than life itself,

Or what seems life to us in sense immured,

Even as the roots, shut in the darksome earth, share in the tree-top's joyance, and conceive of sunshine and wide air and winged things, by sympathy of nature,

So do I have evidence of Thee so far above, yet in and of me.

II

Great truths are portions of the soul of man.

Great souls are portions of eternity.

Wherever any soul hath lived and died, there hath been something for true freedom wrought,

Some bulwark levelled on the evil side.

[1] Reprinted by permission of James Russell Lowell's publishers, Houghton Mifflin Co.

The hope of Truth grows stronger day by day, and every hour new signs of promise tell.

Wider the soul's horizon hourly grows, and over it with fuller glory flows the sky-like spirit of God.

A hope begun in doubt and darkness, beneath a fairer sun cometh to fruitage, if it be of Truth.

And to the law of meekness, faith and love, by inward sympathy, shall all be won.

For through his soul who earnestly believeth, life from the universal Heart doth flow,

Whereby some conquest of eternal woe, by instinct of God's nature, is achieved;

And he more keenly feels the glorious duty of serving Truth, despised and crucified.

Happy, unknowing sect or creed, to feel God flow forever through his breast.

III

We are not free, whose Freedom doth consist in musing with our faces toward the Past.

Freedom is recreated year by year, in hearts wide-open to the Godward side,

In souls calm-cadenced as the whirling sphere,

In minds that sway the Future like a tide.

No broadest creeds, nor codes, can Freedom hold.

She chooses men for her abodes, building them fair and fronting to the dawn.

For as the finder of some unknown realm, mounting a summit whence he thinks to see on either side the imprisoning (ocean),

Beholds peak after snowy peak, stretch out of sight,

Each like a silver helm, beneath its plume of smoke,

And what he thought an island, finds to be a continent, to him first opened,

So we, from our height of Freedom, can look along a boundless Future,

Ours, if we be strong.

LIBERTY AND JUSTICE

Henry George

I

Liberty is a word to conjure with, not to vex the ear in empty boastings;

For Liberty means Justice, and Justice is the natural law — the law of health and strength, of fraternity and co-operation.

II

As the sun is the lord of life, as his beams support all growth, and call forth all the infinite diversities of being and beauty, so is Liberty to mankind.

It is not for an abstraction that in every age the witnesses of Liberty have stood forth, and the martyrs of Liberty suffered.

We speak of Liberty as one thing, and of virtue, wealth, knowledge, national strength and national independence as other things.

But of all these Liberty is the source, the mother, the necessary condition.

She is to virtue what light is to colour;

She is to wealth what sunshine is to grain;

She is to knowledge what eyes are to sight;

She is the genius of invention, the brawn of national strength, the spirit of national independence.

Where Liberty rises, there virtue grows, wealth increases, knowledge expands, and in strength and spirit the freer nation rises among her neighbours as Saul amid his brethren.

[1] Reprinted by permission of Henry George's publishers. Doubleday, Page & Co., from "Progress and Poverty."

Where Liberty sinks, there virtue fades, wealth diminishes, knowledge is forgotten, and Empires once mighty in arms and arts decline.

Only in broken gleams and partial light has the sun of Liberty yet beamed among men, but all progress hath she called forth.

Shall we not trust her?

III

In our times, as in times before, creep on the insidious forces that destroy Liberty by producing inequality.

Liberty calls to us again. We must follow her further; we must trust her fully.

It is not enough that men should vote, not enough that they be equal before the law.

They must have Liberty to avail themselves of the opportunities and means of life, to stand on equal terms with reference to the bounty of nature.

Our primary social adjustments are a denial of Justice.

It is not the Almighty, but we who are responsible for the vice and misery that fester amid our civilization.

God showers upon us his gifts — more than enough for all;

But like swine scrambling for food, we tread them in the mire, and rend each other.

Civilization so based cannot continue. The eternal laws of the universe forbid it;

Ruins of dead Empires testify, and the witness that is in every soul answers, that it cannot be.

It is something grander than Benevolence, something more august than Charity, it is Justice herself, that demands that we right this wrong:

Justice that will not be denied; that cannot be put off; that with the scales carries the sword!

IV

While there is yet time, let us turn to Justice and obey her; let us trust Liberty and follow her.

Then will dangers that now threaten disappear, forces that now menace turn to agencies of elevation.

To remove want and the fear of want, to give to all classes leisure, and comfort, and the decencies and refinements of life, would be like turning water into a desert.

The sterile waste would clothe itself with verdure, and the barren places be dappled with the shades of trees, and musical with the song of birds.

Consider the possibilities of a Society that gives opportunity to all.

Let imagination fill out the picture, its colours grow too bright for words to paint.

It is the Golden Age, of which poets have sung and seers have told in metaphor;

It is the glorious vision which has always haunted man with gleams of fitful splendour;

It is the culmination of Christianity — the City of God on earth, with its walls of jasper and its gates of pearl:

It is the reign of the Prince of Peace.

THE SOCIAL CONSCIENCE[1]

Henry Demarest Lloyd

I

Churches come and go, but there has ever been but one religion.

The only religion is conscience in action.

The social conscience sees that wherever man walks there is the Holy Land.

It raises the cross of a new crusade against infidels, who deny the divine right of the people, that the will of God shall be done on earth as in heaven.

It insists that every question between men is a religious question, a question of moral economy before it becomes one of political economy.

It makes all political, industrial, and social activities the functions of a new church.

II

The church of the social conscience will be a church of the deed as well as of the creed —

A church that will not only preach Christ, but do Christ;

A church where science, the revelation of what has been, will never be at war with religion, the revelation of what ought to be;

A church which will make its worshippers share this world as well as the next world;

A church which will teach that the life eternal is the life we are living now;

[1] Reprinted by permission of Henry Demarest Lloyd's publishers, Doubleday, Page & Co., from "Man the Social Creator."

A church which will recognize no vested right of property in man, except the right to love and to be loved;

A church which will look upon idleness by the side of industry, wealth by the side of poverty, luxury by the side of want, health by the side of disease, as the real sins against the Holy Ghost;

A church which will not let any man offer charity to those to whom it refuses justice;

A church which will recognize nothing as love which does not bear justice as its fruit;

A church which will make every social wrong a moral wrong, and every moral wrong a legal wrong;

A church which will take the weak and the despised out of the earthly Inferno of dirt, and want, and ignorance, to which they have been condemned by the oppressor;

A church which will worship God through all his sons made in his image.

III

The social conscience is creative as well as dutiful and tender.

To be ethical, is to use every power to the fullest, and to co-operate with all for the common good.

Its religion is to do more than practice the personal virtues; it can express its energies only by public co-operation to the public welfare.

Its Golden Rule says, Do! and, in the doing, do as you would be done by.

In building up this conscience, men have been endowing themselves with the power to do that which is best for the whole and the highest, instead of that which is best for a part and the basest.

Civilization is simply applied conscience, and Progress is a widening conscience.

On the day when the truth breaks upon man that these myriads of worlds are but one world, and that the lesser commonwealths of home, town, country are members of a universal commonwealth,

The morning stars will sing together, and all men shout for joy, "Thy will is being done on earth."

THE DREAM OF THE NATIONS [1]

Ernest Crosby

I

The old, old dream of empire — the dream of Alexander and Caesar, of Tamerlane and Genghis Khan;

The dream of subject peoples carrying out our sovereign will through fear;

The dream of a universe forced to converge upon us;

The dream of pride and loftiness justified by strength of arms;

The dream of our arbitrary " Yea " overcoming all " Nays " whatsoever;

The dream of a cold, stern, hated machine of empire!

But there is a more enticing dream; the dream of wise freedom made contagious;

The dream of gratitude rising from broken fetters;

The dream of coercion laid prostrate once for all;

The dream of nations in love with each other, without a thought of hatred or danger;

The dream of tyrants stripped of their tyrannies, and oppressors despoiled of their prey;

The dream of a warm, throbbing, one-hearted empire of brothers!

II

Clear the field for the grand tournament of the nations!

[1] Reprinted by permission of Ernest Crosby's publishers, Funk & Wagnalls, from " Swords and Ploughshares " and " Broadcast."

The struggle to think the best thought, and to express it, in tone and colour and form and word;

The struggle to do the greatest deeds, and lead the noblest and most useful lives;

The struggle to see clearest and know truest and love strongest.

Your other blood and bludgeon contests but postpone the real fray.

The true knights are yearning to enter the lists, and you block the high festival with your brawling.

Is it possible that you mistake this for the real event of history?

Away with your brutal disorder, and clear the field for the tournament of Man.

III

And who will lead the way?

The good and wise must lead.

He that loves most is the best and wisest, and he it is that leads already.

Violence will not yield to violence. Tell the great secret to the people.

Let the people love, and they will lead.

Let the people love, and theirs is the power.

IV

Love comes! Clear the way, ye institutions, ye laws and customs of ages of hate!

The glance of his eyes would wither you.

The quiet thrill of his voice would palsy your deepest foundations.

Ye do well to tremble at his name.

For he is the Revolution — at last the true, long-deferred Revolution.

Love is the true Revolution, for Love alone strikes at the very root of ill.

V

Love the Lord thy God, in thyself!

Love the Lord thy God, in thy neighbour!

Love God in all things,

For this is the one commandment!

THE GOLDEN AGE

Horace Traubel

I

The golden age is in my heart today: it has cut loose from all the yesterdays and tomorrows and allied itself with today;

It has come out of the poems and pictures and prophecies, and fixed itself in me;

The golden age, which you have always looked back somewhere to see:

The golden age, which you have always looked forward somewhere to see:

The always postponed, defeated vision, retreating with your retreat, advancing with your advance:

The lure of the young, the mockery of the old, the folly of noontime:

The sacred, perfect world everywhere, the radiant flawless sundreams drawing us all, body and spirit, into its fairy tangle;

For the golden age is not what you take it for in time, but what it comes to in your heart.

II

You heroes who lived a long while ago, and you heroes who are to come a long while after me,

You joys of lovers who are dead, and you joys of lovers who are unborn,

You forecasts of seers whose scriptures are a thousand years old or are to come in a thousand years,

You eras of ideals lost, and you eras of ideals yet to be won,

I say that you are not dead in books and on canvases and in scrolls of ancient parchment:

I say that you are alive, and more than alive, in my heart to-day.

I do not need to go anywhere to find you in the records or forecasts of other people:

I contain you all — pasts and futures — with something added out of myself.

III

The golden age does not come to money or fame or rulership, but to men and women and children:

It does not come to states and churches or institutions or parties of any sort, but just to you and to me;

To me, the chosen bearer of the pledges of the past to the fulfilment of the future:

To me, the humble, proud instrument of the eternities, for a moment charged to carry the cross:

The whole of man reaching to the whole of man through me,

In the great light that surged and swept over my ecstatic soul, reaching through me.

IV

Who are you, any one, who can remain unmoved when the light breaks upon you?

Who can say it does not concern him? — Who can say it is just as well not to see as to see?

Who can ever be the same child or woman or man again after the day has broken?

Who can admit there is anything else in the world, after this has come to the world?

I brushed all obstructions from my doorsill and stepped into the road:

And though so many cried to me, I did not turn back;

And though I was very sorrowful having to leave so many friends behind, I did not turn back;

And though the ground was rough and I was overtaken by fierce storms, I did not turn back;

And though I was misunderstood and my oldtime companions distrusted me, I did not turn back;

For when the soul is once started on the soul's journey, it can never turn back.

V

You woman or you man, known or unknown, this light has come to the world through you, as much as through any other:

Do you not feel it flowing, crowding, pushing, into every corner of your being?

Is there any nook of you left vacant after its electric flood has swept into you?

Can you now go on with your old life as if nothing had happened?

The whole universe has happened;

All of love in all of life has happened;

All your forgotten kinship to the people has happened;

All the terrible thirst for justice has happened;

And all sad things have happened in gladness at last;

And all things out of place have happened in place at last;

And all old enmity has happened in friendship at last;

The golden age is in my heart today.

THE HOUR OF MAN[1]

Edwin Markham

I

It is the hour of man: new purposes, broad shouldered, press against the world's slow gate.

Man bursts the chains that his own hands have made: hurls down the blind fierce gods that in blind years he fashioned.

No more is God a stranger: he comes as Common Man, at home with cart and crooked yoke.

Know man and you will know the deep of God.

II

Man comes a pilgrim of the universe. At altar fires anterior to earth his soul was lighted;

And it will burn on after suns have wasted in the void.

His feet have felt the pressure of old worlds,

And are to tread on others yet unnamed — worlds sleeping yet in some new dream of God.

Lo, man has laid his sceptre on the stars,

And sent his spell upon the continent.

The heavens confess their secrets and the stars publish their mystery.

Man calls the lightning from its secret place, that he may shrink the spaces of the world.

His hand has torn the veil of the great law — the law that was before the world.

[1] Reprinted by permission of Edwin Markham's publishers, Doubleday, Page & Co., from "Lincoln and Other Poems" and "The Shoes of Happiness."

And now men trace the orbits of the law, and find in it their shelter and their friend.

III

We men of earth have here the stuff of paradise. We have enough.

We need no other stones to build the stairs on to the Unfulfilled.

No other ivory for the doors, no other marble for the floors,

No other cedar for the beam and dome of man's immortal dream.

Here on the common human way is all the stuff to build a heaven.

Ours the stuff to build eternity in time.

IV

There is a destiny that makes us brothers — none goes his way alone.

Into the comrade-future climb the hours.

It comes! the high inbrothering of men, the new earth seen by John of Patmos,

A testament of brotherhood.

What avail, O builders of the world, unless ye build a safety for the soul?

Love's hero-world at last, the joy-world wreathed with freedom.

The will to serve and bear, the will to love and dare, and take for God unprofitable risk.

To turn from love is the world's one treason.

V

Hearken, my America, imperious is your errand, and sublime.

The thunders of the sea are in your name, the splendours and terrors in your heart.

'Tis yours to build the world-state in your dream.

To strike down Mammon and his brazen breed.

Yours to shape the mighty deed,

To build the brother-future.

America, rise to your high born part!

Over all lands a winged hope is flying.

THE COMING PEACE

Woodrow Wilson

I

In these days to come it will be necessary to lay afresh, and upon a new plan, the foundations of peace among the nations.

To take part in such a service the people of the United States have sought to prepare themselves ever since the days when they set up a new nation, in the high and honourable hope that it might show mankind the way to liberty.

The American people believe that peace should rest upon the rights of peoples, not the rights of governments,

The rights of peoples, great or small, weak or powerful,

Their equal right to freedom and security and government,

And to a participation upon fair terms in the economic opportunities of the world.

II

Only a peace between equals can last; only a peace the very principle of which is equality and a common participation in a common benefit.

There must be not only a balance of power, but a community of power; not organized rivalries, but an organized peace.

Right must be based upon the common strength; not upon the individual strength of the nations upon whose concert peace will depend.

The right state of mind, the right feeling between nations, is as necessary for a lasting peace as is the just settlement of questions of territory, or of racial and national allegiance.

No peace can last, or ought to last, which does not recognize and accept the principle that governments derive all their just powers from the consent of the governed;

And that no right anywhere exists to hand people about from sovereignty to sovereignty, as if they were property.

III

Mankind is looking now for freedom of life.

Henceforth inviolable security of life, of worship, and of industrial and social development, should be guaranteed to all peoples.

The world can be at peace only if its life is stable; and there can be no stability where there is not tranquillity of spirit and a sense of justice, of freedom and of right.

It is not of material interest merely that we are thinking. It is rather of fundamental human rights, chief of all the right of life itself,

Of those great principles of compassion and of protection which mankind has sought to throw about human lives —

The lives of men who are peacefully at work, keeping the industrial processes of the world quick and vital,

The lives of women and children, and of those who supply the labour which ministers to their sustenance.

We are speaking of no selfish material rights, but of rights which our hearts support,

Whose foundation is that righteous passion for justice upon which all law, all structures alike of family, of state, and of mankind, must rest.

Our object is to vindicate the principles of peace and justice in the life of the world, as against selfish and autocratic power.

We are but one of the champions of the rights of mankind.

We shall be satisfied when those rights have been made as secure as the faith and the freedom of the nation can make them.

IV

It is a fearful thing to lead this great, peaceful people into war, into the most terrible and disastrous of all wars, civilization itself seeming to be in the balance.

But the right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts:

For democracy,

For the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own governments,

For the rights and liberties of small nations,

For a universal dominion of right, by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations, and make the world itself at last free.

The world must be made safe for democracy.

To such a task we can dedicate our lives and our fortunes, everything that we are, and everything that we have,

With the pride of those who know that the day has come when America is privileged to spend her blood and her might for the principles that gave her birth and happiness, and the peace which she has treasured.

God helping her, she can do no other.

TRUTH AND FREEDOM

John Milton

I

Enter the glorious ways of Truth, and move by enlightened steps to the discovery of knowledge.

Try all things, assenting to the force of reason and convincement.

II

Truth is (as) a streaming fountain; if her waters flow not in a perpetual progression, they sicken into a muddy pool of conformity and tradition.

A man may be a heretic in truth; (for) if he believe things without knowing other reason (than authority), the very truth he holds becomes his heresy.

To be still searching what we know not by what we know, still closing up truth to truth as we find it, this is the golden rule in theology as well as in science.

This makes up the best harmony in a church.

We boast our light; but if we look not wisely on the sun itself, it smites us into darkness.

The light which we have gained, was given us not to be ever staring on, but to discover onward things more remote from our knowledge.

If things in the church, and in life both economical and political, be not looked into and reformed, we have looked so long upon the blaze (the past) hath beaconed up to us, that we are stark blind.

The new light which we beg for, shines, (but) it comes not in at our casements.

III

Truth is strong next to the Almighty.

She needs no policies, no stratagems, to make her victorious.

These are the shifts and the defences that error uses against her power.

Give her but room, and do not bind her when she sleeps.

So Truth be in the field, we do injuriously, by suppressing and prohibiting, to misdoubt her strength.

Let Truth and Falsehood grapple; whoever knew Truth put to the worse in a free and open encounter!

There be, who perpetually complain and make it a calamity that any man dissents from their maxims.

'Tis their own pride and ignorance which causes their disturbing.

They neither will hear with meekness, nor can convince, yet all must be suppressed which is not found in their creed.

A little generous prudence, a little forbearance of one another, and some grain of charity, might unite all in one general and brotherly search after truth.

Suffer not prohibitions to stand at every place of opportunity, forbidding and disturbing them that continue seeking.

Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely, according to conscience, above all liberties.

IV

A state governed by the rules of justice and fortitude, cannot suppress knowledge and new light.

Ages do not often recover the loss of a rejected truth, for the want of which all nations fare the worse.

Consider what nation it is, whereof ye are the citizens.

A nation not slow and dull, but of a quick and piercing spirit, not beneath the reach of any point the highest that human capacity can soar to.

What wants there to such a pregnant soil, to make a nation of prophets, of sages, and of worthies?

What but the earnest and zealous thirst after knowledge which God hath stirred up in this people?

What but the liberty which valorous and happy counsels have purchased us?

What but the liberty which hath rarified and enlightened our spirits, like the influence of heaven?

Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation, rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks.

Methinks I see her as an eagle, nursing her mighty youth;

Kindling her undazzled eyes at the full noon-day beam; purging and unscaling her sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance;

While the whole noise of timorous and flocking birds, with those also that love the twilight, flutter about amazed at what she means.

THROUGH NATURE TO GOD

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

I

I have learned to look on Nature, not as in the hour of thoughtless youth, but hearing oftentimes the still sad music of humanity,

Well pleased to recognize in Nature the soul of all my moral being.

Therefore am I still a lover of the woods and mountains.

Nature never did betray the heart that loved her.

With an eye made quiet by the power of harmony and the deep power of joy, we see into the life of things.

To me the meanest flower that blows, can give thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

(I have felt) that blessed mood in which the burthen of the mystery, in which the heavy and the weary weight of all this unintelligible world, is lightened,

I have felt a presence that disturbs me with the joy of elevated thoughts,

A sense sublime of something far more deeply interfused, whose dwelling is the light of setting suns and the round ocean, and the living air, and in the mind of man,

A motion and a spirit that impels all thinking things, all objects of all thought, and rolls through all things.

II

I despair not of our nature, but retain a more than human confidence, of faith that fails not, in all sorrow my support, the blessing of my life.

The gift is yours, ye winds and sounding cataracts! 'Tis thine, O Nature.

Thus deeply drinking in the soul of things, we shall be wise perforce.

We shall move unswerving along the path of order and of good.

(We hear) borne on the wind the articulate voice of God, and angels to our sight appear, gliding like morning mist enkindled by the sun.

We talk with winged messengers who daily bring tidings of joy and love.

Thoughts arise of life continuous, being unimpaired, that hath been, is, and where it was and is, there shall endure,

The silent thoughts that search for steadfast light, love from her depths and duty in her might.

III

Stern Daughter of the Voice of God! O Duty! who art a light to guide, a rod to check the erring,

There are, who ask not if thine eye be on them, who do thy work and know it not.

Serene will be our days and bright, and happy will our nature be, when love is an unerring light,

And joy its own security.

(Duty), Stern Lawgiver! yet thou dost wear the Godhead's most benignant grace,

Nor know we anything so fair, as is the smile upon thy face.

Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong, and the most ancient heavens, through Thee are fresh and strong.

I myself commend unto Thy guidance from this hour.

Give unto me, made lowly wise, the spirit of self-sacrifice.

And in the light of truth Thy Bondman let me live.

IV

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting: the soul that rises with us, our life's star, hath had elsewhere its setting, and cometh from afar.

Trailing clouds of glory do we come from God, who is our home.

Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

There's not a man that lives who hath not known his god-like hours.

I cannot doubt that they, whom you deplore, are glorified; or, if they sleep, shall wake from sleep and dwell with God in endless love.

We are laid asleep in body and become a living soul.

Hope below this consists not with belief in mercy.

Hope below this consists not with belief in perfect wisdom.

Though inland far we be, our souls have sight of that immortal sea which brought us hither, and hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

And all the weight of sadness is in wonder lost.

FAITH

Alfred Tennyson

I

There lives more faith in honest doubt, believe me, than in half the creeds.

Men may rise on stepping stones of their dead selves to higher things.

II

Are God and Nature at strife? Shall man, her last work, who seemed so fair, such splendid promise in his eyes,

Who loved, who suffered ills, who battled for the True, the Just,

(Shall man) be blown about the desert dust or sealed within the iron hills? Oh life as futile then as frail!

What hope of answer or redress?

Behold, we know not anything, we stretch lame hands of faith, and gather dust and chaff,

And faintly trust the larger hope.

III

Oh yet we trust that somehow good shall be the final goal of ill, that nothing walks with aimless feet,

That not one life shall be destroyed, or cast as rubbish to the void, when God hath made the pile complete.

Contemplate all the work of time, nor dream of human love and truth as dying Nature's earth and lime.

Those we call the dead are breathers of an ampler day for ever nobler ends.

We have but faith: we cannot know; let knowledge grow from more to more.

In my spirit will I dwell, and dream my dream and hold it true.

IV

Love is and was my lord and king, the love that rose on stronger wings unpalsied when he met with death.

And all is well, though faith and form be sundered in the night of fear.

Immortal Love, whom we that have not seen thy face by faith alone embrace, believing where we cannot prove,

Our wills are ours we know not how, our wills are ours to make them thine.

Oh living will that shalt endure, when all that seems shall suffer shock,

Flow through our deeds and make them pure,

That we may lift from out of dust a voice above the conquered years to one that with us works,

That God which ever lives and loves.

One God, one law, one element,

And one far off divine event, to which the whole creation moves.

V

Come, my friends, 'tis not too late to seek a newer world; to follow knowledge like a sinking star beyond the utmost bound of human thought.

Though much is taken, much abides.

That which we are, we are; one equal temper of heroic hearts,

Strong in will to strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

FIGHT ON — FARE EVER

ROBERT BROWNING

I

I go to prove my soul.

Knowing, not for knowing's sake, but to become a star to men for ever.

Crush not my mind, dear God, though I be crushed; rather I prize the doubt low kinds exist without.

Just so much of doubt as bade me plant a surer foot upon the sun-road.

Love, hope, fear, faith — these make humanity.

Love, not serenely pure, but strong from weakness.

Love which endures and doubts and is oppressed; oft-failing, yet believing love.

If I stoop into a dark tremendous sea of cloud, it is but for a time.

I press God's lamp close to my breast. Its splendour soon or late will pierce the gloom.

I shall emerge one day.

II

I report as a man may of God's work — all's love, yet all's law.

Life is to wake, not sleep; rise, and not rest.

I count life just a stuff to try the soul's strength on.

Then welcome each rebuff that turns earth's smoothness rough.

Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never grudge the throe.

There shall never be one lost good! All we have willed, or hoped, or dreamed of good shall exist.

The high that proved too high, the heroic, for earth too hard, are music sent up to God.

Enough that he heard it once; we shall hear it by and by.

For life with all it yields of joy and woe, and hope and fear, is just our chance of the prize of learning love;

Man should for love's sake, in love's strength believe.

God, thou art love! I build my faith on that.

Earth changes, but the soul and God stand sure.

III

So glorious is our nature, so august man's inborn uninstructed impulses, his naked spirit so majestical;

Man grows too great for narrow creeds of right and wrong, which fade before the unmeasured thirst for good.

Truth is the strong thing; let man's life be true.

Truth is within ourselves; it takes no rise from outward things.

God's gift is that man should conceive of truth and yearn to gain it.

(May I be) one who never turned his back, but marched breast forward;

Never doubted clouds would break; never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,

Held we fall to rise; are baffled to fight better; sleep to wake.

Through such souls alone God, stooping, shows sufficient of his light for us in the dark to rise by.

I see my way as birds their trackless way.

And (though) God send his hail or blinding fireballs, sleet or stifling snow —

In some time, his good time, I shall arrive.

CALM SOUL OF ALL THINGS[1]

MATTHEW ARNOLD

I

One lesson, Nature, let me learn of thee, one lesson which in every wind is blown,

Of toil unsevered from tranquillity.

Calm soul of all things, make it mine to feel amid the city's jar that there abides a peace of thine, man did not make and cannot mar.

The hush among the shining stars, the calm upon the moon-lit sea.

Oh that my heart bounded with the swell of the sea!

Oh that my soul were full of light as the stars!

Oh that it brooded over the world like the air!

(For) with joy the stars perform their shining, and the sea its long moon-silvered roll;

Unaffrighted by the silence round them, undistracted by the sights they see,

In their own tasks all their powers pouring, these attain the mighty life you see.

Ye heavens, you remain a world above man's head,

To let him see how boundless might his soul's horizons be.

II

Strong is the soul and wise and beautiful,

The seeds of Godlike power are in us still.

[1] Reprinted by permission of Matthew Arnold's publishers, the Macmillan Co.

Still doth the soul from its lone fastness high, upon our life a ruling effluence send.

And when it fails, fight as we will, we die;

And while it lasts, we cannot wholly end.

The soul breasts her own griefs; man can control to pain, to death, the bent of his own days.

Be his my special thanks, whose everbalanced soul business could not make dull nor passion wild,

Who saw life steadily and saw it whole.

III

Hath man no second life?

Pitch this one high!

Sits there no judge in Heaven our sin to see?

More strictly then the inward judge obey.

Was Christ a man like us?

Ah, let us try if we then, too, can be such men as he!

IV

A wanderer is man from his birth,

He was born in a ship on the breast of the river of Time.

Vainly does each as he glides dream of the land which the river had left ere he woke on its breast, or shall reach when his eyes have been closed.

But what was before us we know not, and we know not what shall succeed.

The width of the waters, the hush of the grey expanse where he floats

May strike peace to the soul of the man on its breast,

As the pale waste widens around him, as the banks fade dimmer away, as the stars come out,

And the night wind brings up the stream, murmurs and scents of the infinite sea.

V

Still Nature's sleepless ministers move on, their glorious tasks in silence perfecting,

Labourers that shall not fail when man is gone.

The light we sought is shining still;

On, to the bound of the waste; on, to the city of God!

THE GOSPEL OF WORK

Thomas Carlyle

I

Generations are as the days of toilsome mankind; death and birth are the vesper and the matin bells that summon mankind to sleep, and to rise refreshed for new advancement. But whence? O Heaven, whither?

Sense knows not; faith knows not; only that it is through mystery to mystery, from God to God.

Not a May-day game is man's life, but a battle and a march, a stern pilgrimage through burning sandy solitudes, through regions of thick-ribbed ice!

He walks among men, loves men, but his soul dwells in solitude, in the uttermost parts of creation.

II

This fair universe is in very deed the star-domed city of God; through every star, through every grass-blade, and most through every living soul, the glory of a present God still beams.

The universe is but one vast symbol of God. What is man himself but a symbol of God?

Is not all that he does symbolical, a revelation to sense of the mystic God-given force that is in him, a gospel of freedom which he preaches as he can by act and word?

'Not a hut he builds but is the visible embodiment of a thought; but bears visible record of invisible things.

Through all (symbols) glimmers something of a divine idea; as through military banners the divine idea of duty, of heroic daring.

But nobler than all, in this kind, are the lives of heroic God-inspired men.

Look on our divinest symbol: on Jesus of Nazareth, and his life and what followed therefrom.

This is Christianity and Christendom, a symbol whose significance will ever demand to be anew made manifest.

III

Two men I honour and no third. First, the toilworn craftsman that with earth-made implements laboriously conquers the earth and makes her man's.

Venerable to me is the hard hand.

Venerable too is the rugged face. Oh, but the more venerable for thy rudeness, and even because we must pity as well as love thee!

Hardly entreated brother! For us was thy back so bent.

It is not because of his toils that I lament for the poor. The poor is hungry and athirst, but for him also there is food and drink.

He is heavy laden and weary; but for him also the heavens send sleep.

What I *do* mourn over is that the lamp of his soul should go out. Alas, while the body stands so broad and brawny, must the soul lie blinded, dwarfed, stupefied, almost annihilated!

That there should one man die ignorant who had capacity for knowledge, this I call a tragedy.

A second man I honour, and still more highly: him who is seen toiling for the spiritually indispensable; not daily bread but the Bread of Life.

Is not he too in his duty?

(He is) not earthly craftsman only, but inspired thinker, who with heaven-made implement conquers heaven for us.

These two, in all their degrees, I honour; all else is chaff and dust.

IV

It is all work, this peopled, clothed, high-towered, wide-acred world. The hands of forgotten men have made it a world for us.

The only happiness a brave man ever troubled himself with asking much about, was happiness enough to get his work done.

Whatsoever of morality and of intelligence, what of patience, perseverance, faithfulness, in a word whatsoever of strength the man had in him, will lie written in the work he does.

All true work is sacred.

Labour, wide as the earth, has its summit in heaven; sweat of the brow, and up from that to sweat of the brain, sweat of the heart.

O brother, if this is not worship, the more pity for worship, for this is the noblest thing yet discovered under God's sky.

It is to you, ye workers, that the whole world calls for new work and nobleness.

To make some nook of God's creation a little fruitfuller, better, more worthy of God.

To make some human hearts a little wiser, manfuller, happier. It is work for a god.

Blessed is he who has found his work; let him ask no other blessedness.

GOD AND MAMMON

John Ruskin

I

The writings which we esteem as divine denounce the love of money as the source of all evil, as an idolatry abhorred of the Deity.

(They) declare mammon service to be the accurate and irreconcilable opposite of God's service.

Whenever they speak of riches absolute, and poverty absolute, (they) declare woe to the rich, and blessing to the poor.

Whereupon we forthwith investigate a science of becoming rich, as the shortest road to national prosperity!

(In) no previous instance in history (has) a nation established a systematic disobedience to the first principles of its religion.

Nothing in history has ever been so disgraceful to human intellect as the acceptance among us of the common doctrines of political economy.

II

The real political economy is that which teaches nations to desire and labour for the things that lead to life.

Which teaches them to scorn and destroy the things that lead to destruction.

If they imagine precious and beneficent things, such as air, light and cleanliness, to be valueless, or the conditions of their own existence, such as peace, trust, and love, to be exchangeable for gold —

The great and only science of Political Economy teaches them what is vanity, and what substance.

There is no Wealth but Life.

Life, including all its powers of love, of joy, and of admiration!

That country is the richest which nourishes the greatest number of noble and happy human beings.

That man is richest who has the widest helpful influence over the lives of others.

III

The presence of a wise population implies the search for felicity as well as for food.

The desire of the heart is also the light of the eyes.

No scene is continually and untiringly loved, but one rich by joyful human labour —

Smooth in field; fair in garden; full in orchard; trim, sweet and fragrant in homestead.

No air is sweet that is silent; it is only sweet when full of low currents of under-sound.

Triplets of birds, murmur and chirp of insects, deep-toned words of men, wayward trebles of childhood.

As the art of life is learned, it will be found at last that all lovely things are also necessary —

The wild-flower by the wayside, as well as the tended corn, the wild creatures of the forest, as well as the tended cattle.

Man does not live by bread only, but by every wondrous word and unknowable work of God —

Happy that he knew them not, and that round about him reaches yet into the infinite, the amazement of his existence.

IV

The existence to which men are now summoned by every plea of pity and claim of right, may not be a luxurious one.

(But) consider whether luxury would be desired by any of us, if we saw clearly at our sides the suffering which accompanies it.

Luxury is indeed possible in the future — luxury innocent and exquisite;

Luxury for all, and by the help of all.

But luxury at present can only be enjoyed by the ignorant.

The cruelest man living could not sit at his feast, unless he sat blindfold.

Raise the veil boldly, face the light!

As yet the light of the eye can only be through tears, and the light of the body through sackcloth.

(But) go thou forth weeping, bearing precious seed, until the time come, and the kingdom —

When Christ's gift of bread and bequest of peace shall be Unto this Last as unto thee!

THE TASK OF HAPPINESS[1]

Robert Louis Stevenson

I

I see a solemn, a terrible, but a very joyous and noble universe, where suffering is not at least wantonly inflicted, though it falls with dispassionate partiality, but where it may be, and generally is, nobly borne;

Where any brave man may make out a life which shall be happy for himself, and, by so being, beneficent to those about him.

The task before us, which is to co-endure with our existence, is one of microscopic fineness, and the heroism required is that of patience.

There is no cutting of the Gordian knots of life; each must be smilingly unravelled.

O toiling hands of mortals! O unwearied feet, travelling ye know not whither!

Soon it seems you must come forth on some conspicuous hilltop, and a little way further, against the setting sun, descry the spires of El Dorado.

Little do ye know your own blessedness; for to travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive, and the true success is labour.

We were put here to do what service we can, for honour and not for hire.

Give us courage and gaiety and the quiet mind — still to be true to what small best we can attain to.

[1] Reprinted by permission of Robert Louis Stevenson's publishers, Charles Scribner's Sons, from "Letters," "Virginibus Puerisque," "Across the Plains," "Prayers" and "Memories and Portraits."

We are all nobly born; fortunate those who know it; blessed those who remember it.

II

There is an idea abroad among moral people that they should make their neighbours good. One person I have to make good — myself.

But my duty to my neighbour is much more nearly expressed by saying that I have to make him happy — if I may.

To be honest, to be kind — to earn a little and to spend a little less, to make upon the whole a family happier for his presence, to renounce when that shall be necessary and not be embittered, to keep a few friends but these without capitulation —

Here is a task for all that a man has of fortitude and delicacy.

III

To have suffered, nay, to suffer, sets a keen edge on what remains of the agreeable. This is a great truth and has to be learned in the fire.

Granted that life is tragic to the marrow, it seems the proper function of religion to make us accept and serve in that tragedy.

Service is the word, active service in the military sense, and the religious man is he who has a military joy in duty. For to miss the joy is to miss all.

Noble disappointment, noble self-denial are not to be admired, not even to be pardoned, if they bring bitterness.

Gentleness and cheerfulness, these come before all morality; they are the perfect duties.

To do our best is one part, but to wash our hands smilingly of the consequence is the next part, of any sensible virtue.

Man is indeed marked for failure in his efforts to do right. But where the best consistently miscarry, how ten-fold more

remarkable that under every circumstance of failure, without hope, without help, without thanks, all should continue to strive.

This is not alone their privilege and glory, but their doom; they are condemned to some nobility.

Let it be enough for faith, that the whole creation groans in mortal frailty, strives with unconquerable constancy; surely not all in vain.

To believe in immortality is one thing, but it is first needful to believe in life.

IV

The day returns and brings us the petty round of irritating concerns and duties.

Help us to perform them with laughter and kind faces; let cheerfulness abound with industry.

Give us to go blithely on our business all this day.

Bring us to our resting beds weary and content and undishonoured, and grant us in the end the gift of sleep.

And when the day returns, return to us our sun and comforter, and call us up with morning faces and with morning hearts —

Eager to labour — eager to be happy, if happiness shall be our portion — and if the day be marked for sorrow, strong to endure.

GOD THE INVISIBLE KING[1]

H. G. Wells

I

Religion is the first thing and the last thing, and until a man has found God, and been found by God, he begins at no beginning, he works to no end.

He may have his friendships, his partial loyalties, his scraps of honour, but all these fall into place, and life falls into place, only with God.

Only with God, who fights through men against Blind Force and Might and Non-Existence;

Who fights with men against the confusion and evil within us and without, and against death in every form;

Who loves us as a great captain loves his men, and stands ready to use us in his immortal adventure against waste, disorder, cruelty and vice;

Who is the end, who is the meaning, who is the only King.

II

The moment may come while we are alone in the darkness under the stars, or while we walk by ourselves or in a crowd.

It may come upon the sinking ship or in the tumult of the battle.

There is no saying when it may not come.

For it comes as the dawn comes, through whatever clouds and mists.

It comes as the day comes to the ships that put to sea.

[1] Reprinted by permission of H. G. Wells' publishers, the Macmillan Co., from " Mr. Britling Sees it Through " and " God the Invisible King."

But after it comes, our lives are changed.

Before the coming of the true King, the inevitable King, the King who is present when just men foregather, this blood-stained rubbish of an ancient world shrivels like paper thrust into a flame.

Thereafter one goes about like one who was lonely and has found a lover, like one who was perplexed and has found a solution.

One is assured that there is a Power that fights with us against the confusion and evil of the world.

There comes into the heart an enduring happiness and courage.

III

God faces the blackness of the Unknown, the confusions and cruelties of Life, as one who leads mankind through a dark jungle to a great conquest.

He brings mankind not rest but a sword.

We who have found him and given ourselves joyfully to him, must needs be equally ready to give our energies to the task we share with him, to bring about the establishment of his real and visible Kingdom throughout the world.

Transformation into a citizen of God's kingdom follows on from the moment when God and the believer meet and clasp one another.

The kingdom of God on earth is not a dream, or uncertain project; it is the thing before us, the close and inevitable destiny of mankind.

In a few score years, the faith of the true God will be spreading about the world.

In but a few centuries, the whole world will be openly, confessedly, preparing for the kingdom.

In but a few centuries, God will have led us out of the dark forest of these present wars and confusions, into the open brotherhood of his rule.

IV

We are working out a new way of living for mankind, a new rule, a new conscience.

It is no small job for all of us.

There must be lifetimes of building up and lifetimes of pulling down and trying again —

Hopes and disappointments, and much need of philosophy.

Let us therefore pledge ourselves to service.

Let us make ourselves watchers and guardians of the order of the world.

Let us set ourselves, with all our minds and all our hearts, to the perfecting and working out of the salvation of mankind.

All our lives hereafter go to serve it.

NATURE[1]

John Galsworthy

I

Brothers! Behold! The stars are lit forever!

The land and sky are like a symphony of great music, or the nobility of a stupendous mind laid bare.

Through all the black wide night of stars our souls shall touch the sky in God's own quietude of things, and gain brief freedom from this clutch of life's encompassings.

It is God up there in his many moods.

The spirit goes forth a little, enters the harmony of things, and drinks the magic of the world;

(And is) happy and quiet, like the stars and the birds.

Surely the spirit of the world is in the birds and the clouds.

And in the flowers and trees that are never restless.

If the mountains cannot teach us, and the wide night skies above them, sparkling with other worlds, then nothing will.

For on mountains and beneath such skies man feels at his greatest, flies forth in fancy and dreams of nobility.

II

All things in the universe, which have an individual shape, are fit expressions of the separate moods of a great underlying Mood or Principle.

[1] Reprinted by permission of John Galsworthy's publishers, Charles Scribner's Sons, from "The Patrician," "A Sheaf," "Moods, Songs and Doggerels," "Freelands," "The Inn of Tranquillity," and "A Bit o' Love."

And the old words good and evil seem more than ever quaint.

(For) in a savage, slinking shadow I know that I behold a manifestation of divinity no less than in the smile of the sky, each minute growing more starry.

What secret, marvellous, all-pervading Principle can harmonize these things?

No more are life and death apart!

No more the winter longs for June!

It still is night and yet is day!

O magic dream of God revealed; O utter mystery unsealed!

III

Slowly has passed the daily miracle. It is night.

But Felicity has not withdrawn; she has but changed her robe.

Everything is sleeping, save only a single star and the pansies.

This serenity of night! What could seem less likely ever more to move and change again to day?

And yet it is not so; the nightly miracle has passed;

For the starling has begun its job, and the sun is fretting those dark busy wings with gold.

Full day has come again!

But the face of it is a little strange; it is not like yesterday.

Queer — to think no day is like to a day that is past,

And no night like a night that is coming.

Why then fear death, which is but night?

Why care if next day have different face and spirit?

It is Felicity on her wings.

God of the moon and the sun, of joy and beauty, of loneliness and sorrow — give me strength to go on, till I love every living thing!

TOWARDS DEMOCRACY[1]

Edward Carpenter

I

Where Freedom makes itself known in a people or even in the soul of a single man or woman, there Democracy begins.

Freedom! the deep breath! the word heard centuries and centuries beforehand; the soul singing low and passionate to itself: Joy! Joy!

II

In the deep cave of the heart, far down, running under the outward shows of the world and of people,

Running under continents, under the fields and the roots of the grasses and trees,

Under the little thoughts and dreams of men, and the history of races,

I see, feel and hear wondrous and divine things.

I seem to see the strands of affection and love, so tender, so true and life-long, holding together the present and past generations.

The currents of love and thought streaming in the watches of the night from far and near, from one to another,

Streaming all the more powerfully for the very hindrances and disasters which arrive or threaten.

I dream that these are the fibres and nerves of a body that lies within the outer body of society;

A network, an innumerable vast interlocked ramification, slowly being built up;

[1] Reprinted by permission of Edward Carpenter's publishers, George Allen & Unwin, Limited, from "Towards Democracy."

All dear lovers and friends, all families, groups, all peoples, nations, all times, all worlds perhaps,

Members of a body, archetypal, eterne, glorious, the centre and perfection of life.

The organic growth of God himself in time.

III

Democracy! Underneath all now comes this Word, turning the edges of the other words where they meet it.

Politics, art, science, commerce, religion, customs and methods of daily life, the very outer shows and semblances of ordinary objects,

Their meanings must all now be absorbed and recast in this word, or else fall off like dry husks before its disclosure.

The old structures can no longer stand — their very foundations are shifted;

And men run forth in terror from the old, before they can yet find firm ground for the new.

In all directions gulfs and yawning abysses,

The ground of society cracking, the fire showing through,

The old ties giving way beneath the strain, and the great pent heart heaving as though it would break,

At the sound of the new word spoken,

At the sound of the word Democracy.

IV

No volcano bursting up through peaceful pastures is a greater revolution than this;

No vast mountain chain thrown out from ocean depths to form a new continent, looks further down the future;

For this is lava springing out of the very heart of Man;

This is the upheaval of heaven-kissing summits, whose streams shall feed the farthest generations,

This is the draft and outline of a new creature,

The forming of the wings of Man beneath the outer husk,

The outspread pinions of Equality, whereon arising he shall at last lift himself over the Earth and launch forth to sail through Heaven.

The Arisen and Mighty soul of Man!

GOD AND HUMANITY

Joseph Mazzini

I

Three things are sacred: Tradition, Progress, Association.

I believe in the immense voice of God which the centuries transmit to me through the universal Tradition of Humanity.

I believe in the eternal Progress of the life in God's creatures, and in the progress of Thought and Action, not only in the man of the past, but in the man of the future.

I believe in Association, as the sole measure which we possess of accomplishing Progress.

And I know that Association can never be fruitful unless it exists among free individuals, among free nations, capable of realizing their solemn mission.

I believe in Humanity, in which is most fully manifested God's thought on earth.

II

The duty of each of you is to use the life which God gave you, to preserve and develop it; each of you, then, owes to life a debt of labour.

Our most important duties are positive. It is not enough not to do harm; we must do good to our brothers.

Life is love.

Life is movement, aspiration, progress.

You cannot obtain your rights except by obeying the commands of Duty.

The origin of your duties is in God.

The definition of your duties is found in His law.

The progressive discovery and application of His law is the task of Humanity.

III

The law of God is one, as God is one; but we only discover it article by article, line by line.

We can only rise to God through the souls of our fellowmen.

God is in you without doubt; but God is likewise in all men who people this earth;

God is in the life of all generations which were, which are, and which are to be.

God has given you the general opinion of your fellowmen, and your own conscience, to be to you two wings with which to soar to Him.

God asks not what have you done for your soul?, but what have you done for the brother souls I gave you?

Wherever a man suffers through the oppression of error, of injustice, of tyranny, there is your brother.

Why speak of Brotherhood and yet allow our brothers every day to be trampled, degraded, despised?

If error rules your brothers in some other corner of this earth and you do not desire, and endeavour as far as lies in your power, to overthrow it, you are false to your duty.

A solemn mission is ours: to prove that we are all sons of God and brothers in Him.

IV

Life then was given you by God that you might use it for the benefit of Humanity.

You cannot, even if you would, separate your life from that of Humanity; you live in it, by it, for it.

The time has come for the promulgation of the truth not only that Humanity is a single body and ought to be governed by a single Law, but that the first article of the Law is Progress.

The word Progress, unknown to antiquity, will be from henceforth a sacred word for Humanity.

Humanity is the living word of God.

Trust in the goodness of your cause and in the power of Truth.

Trust in God.

Be faithful, and you will conquer.

A CONFESSION OF FAITH

Leo Tolstoi

I

I believe in God, who is for me spirit, love, the principle of all things.

I believe that God is in me, as I am in him.

I believe that the true welfare of man consists in fulfilling the will of God.

I believe that from the fulfilment of the will of God there can follow nothing but that which is good for me and for all men.

I believe that the will of God is that every man should love his fellow-men, and should act toward others as he desires that they should act toward him.

I believe that the reason of life is for each of us simply to grow in love.

I believe that this growth in love will contribute more than any other force to establish the Kingdom of God on earth—

To replace a social life in which division, falsehood and violence are all-powerful, with a new order in which humanity, truth and brotherhood will reign.

II

I believe that the will of God has never been more clearly, more freely, expressed than in the teaching of the man Jesus.

I believe that this teaching will give welfare to all humanity, save men from destruction, and give this world the greatest happiness.

[1] Reprinted by permission of Leo Tolstoi's publishers, Thomas Y. Crowell Co., from " My Religion " and " Confessions."

Jesus's teaching is goodness and truth. Its essence is the unity of mankind, the love of men for one another.

This is not an ideal after which men are to strive, but a natural condition into which they are born.

Jesus showed me that superiority over men, my anger against them, is destructive of my good.

I understand now that he alone is above others who humbles himself before others, and makes himself the servant of all.

If, therefore, knowing this, in a moment of forgetfulness, I give myself up to anger, and abuse of a brother, in my quiet state of mind I cannot yield to this temptation.

I can no longer yield to anything which lifts me above or separates me from others.

Jesus showed me that resort to violence for the resistance of evil is destructive of my welfare.

I know now that a great portion of the evils that afflict mankind is due to the erroneous belief that life can be made secure by violence.

If, now, in a moment of forgetfulness, I yield to the impulse to resort to violence, I cannot deliberately and calmly use this snare to destruction.

I am obliged to renounce violence, and abstain from it altogether.

Jesus showed me that the distinction between foreigners and compatriots deprives me of my well-being.

I know now that my unity with others cannot be shut off by a frontier, or a government decree.

If, therefore, in a moment of forgetfulness, I have a feeling of hostility toward any man, I am obliged, in quiet moments of reflection, to regard this feeling as wrong.

I know that all men everywhere are brothers and equals, and that my true welfare is found in my unity with the whole world.

III

I believe that the fulfilment of the teaching of Jesus is possible.

I believe that even if I should be the only one, there is nothing else for me to do but to fulfil it.

A religious man is guided in his activity not by the consequence of his action, but by the consciousness of the destination of his life.

A religious man fulfils the work prescribed to him by God, without arguing as to what will come of that work.

For a religious man, there is no question as to whether many or few men act as he does, or of what may happen to him if he does that which he should do.

He knows that besides life and death, nothing can happen, and that life and death are in the hands of God.

ABOVE THE BATTLE[1]

Romain Rolland

I

O young men that shed your blood with so generous a joy for the starving earth!

O heroism of the world!

O young men of all nations, brought by a common ideal into conflict which makes enemies of those who should be brothers, all of you, marching to your death, are dear to me!

O friends, may nothing mar your joy! Whatever fate has in store, you have risen to the pinnacle of earthly life.

Conquerors or conquered, living or dead, rejoice!

You are doing your duty; but have others done theirs?

II

A great nation assailed by war has not only its frontiers to protect: it must also protect its good sense.

It must protect itself from the deceptions, injustices and follies which the plague lets loose.

To each his part — to the armies the protection of the soil of their native land, to the thinkers the defence of its thought.

If they subordinate that thought to the passions of the people, they betray the spirit which is not the least part of a people's patrimony.

Even in time of war it remains a crime for (men) to compromise the integrity of their thought.

[1] Reprinted by permission of Romain Rolland's publishers, The Open Court Publishing Co., from "Above the Battle."

It is shameful to see it serving the passion of a childish, monstrous policy of race.

Come, friends! Let us make a stand! Can we not resist this contagion?

Shall love of country flourish only through hatred of other countries?

No! Love of my country does not demand that I shall hate noble souls who also love theirs.

Rather does it demand that I shall honour them, and seek to unite with them for our common good.

O ye of little faith, ye know not your moral power!

If there be risk, shall we not take it for the honour of humanity?

Carry truth in your hands. Let it be our strongest weapon.

Let us fight not against our enemies, but for them.

In saving the world, let us save them too.

Let us be on our guard against hatred.

Do not destroy the future. A good, open, clean wound will heal, but do not poison it.

If we prepare for war in peace, we should also prepare for peace in war.

It is a task which seems to me not unworthy of those who, through the life of the spirit, have wider relations with the universe —

This little lay church which today, more than any other, preserves its faith in the unity of human thought and believes that all men are sons of the same Father.

III

For the finer spirits of (the world) there are two dwelling places: our earthly fatherland, and that other City of God.

Of the one we are the guests, of the other the builders.

To the one let us give our lives and our faithful hearts; but neither family, friend, nor fatherland has power over the spirit.

The spirit is the light.

It is our duty to lift it above tempests, and thrust aside the clouds which threaten to obscure it,

To build higher and stronger, dominating the injustice and hatred of nations, the walls of that city wherein the souls of the whole world may assemble.

LIFE OF MY LIFE [1]

SIR RABINDRANATH TAGORE

I

Life of my life, I shall ever try to keep my body pure, knowing that thy living touch is upon all my limbs.

I shall ever try to keep all untruths out from my thoughts, knowing that thou art that truth which has kindled the light of reason in my mind.

I shall ever try to drive all evils away from my heart and keep my love in flower, knowing that thou hast thy seat in the inmost shrine of my heart.

And it shall be my endeavour to reveal thee in my actions, knowing it is thy power gives me strength to act.

II

This is my prayer to thee, my Lord — strike, strike at the root of penury in my heart.

Give me the strength lightly to bear my joys and sorrows.

Give me the strength to make my love fruitful in service.

Give me the strength never to disown the poor or bend my knees before insolent might.

Give me the strength to raise my mind high above daily trifles.

And give me the strength to surrender my strength to thy will in love.

III

When the heart is hard and parched up, come upon me with a shower of mercy.

[1] Reprinted by permission of Sir Rabindranath Tagore's publishers, the Macmillan Company, from "Gitanjali."

When grace is lost from life, come with a burst of song.

When my beggarly heart sits crouched shut up in a corner, break open the door, my king, and come with the ceremony of a king.

When desire blinds the heart with delusion and dust, O thou holy one, come with thy light and thy thunder.

IV

Day after day, O Lord of my life, shall I stand before thee face to face. With folded hands, O Lord of all worlds, shall I stand before thee face to face.

Under thy great sky in solitude and silence, with humble heart shall I stand before thee face to face.

In this laborious world of thine, tumultuous with toil and with struggle, among hurrying crowds shall I stand before thee face to face.

And when my work shall be done in this world, O King of kings, alone and speechless shall I stand before thee face to face.

V

In one salutation to thee, my God, let all my senses spread out and touch this world at thy feet.

Like a rain cloud hung low with its burden of showers, let all my mind bend down at thy door, in one salutation to thee.

Let all my songs gather together their diverse strains into a single current and flow to a sea of silence, in one salutation to thee.

Like a flock of home-sick cranes, flying night and day back to their mountain nests, let my life take its voyage to its eternal home, in one salutation to thee.

THE PATH OF LIFE

Buddha

I

Many gods and men have held various things to be blessings, when they were yearning for happiness.

Do thou declare to us the chief of good.

Not to serve the foolish, but to serve the wise; to honour those worthy of honour,—

This is the greatest blessing.

To dwell in a pleasant land, with right desires in the heart —

This is the greatest blessing.

Self-control and pleasant speech, and whatever word be well spoken —

This is the greatest blessing.

To live righteously, to give help to kindred, to follow a peaceful calling —

This is the greatest blessing.

To abhor and cease from evil, not to be weary in well doing —

This is the greatest blessing.

To be long-suffering and meek, to associate with the peaceable —

This is the greatest blessing.

Beneath the stroke of life's changes, the mind that shaketh not, without grief or passion, and secure —

This is the greatest blessing.

On every side are invincible they who do acts like these, on every side they walk in safety —

And theirs is the greatest blessing.

II

The real treasure is that laid up by man or woman, through love and piety, temperance and self-control, in his fellow-man as in a shrine.

The treasure thus hid is secure, and passes not away.

Though he leave the fleeting riches of the world, this a man takes with him —

A treasure that no wrong of others, and no thief, can steal — the treasure that follows of itself.

III

Let us live happily, then, though we call nothing our own!

We shall become like the bright gods who feed on happiness.

Let us live happily, free from ailments among the ailing!

Let us dwell free from afflictions, among men who are sick at heart.

Let us live happily, free from care among the busy.

Let us dwell free from yearning among men who are anxious.

Let us live happily, not hating those who hate us.

Let us live free from hatred among men who hate.

For never does hatred cease by hatred, hatred ceases by love, this is always its nature.

Let us, therefore, overcome anger by kindness, evil by good, falsehood by truth.

Let us speak the truth; yield not to anger; give when asked, even from the little that we have.

By these three things shall we enter the presence of the gods,

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

JESUS

I

Behold the good tidings of the Kingdom of God!

Which is like unto a seed cast upon the earth, which groweth up, first the blade, then the ear, and then the full corn in the ear.

II

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength;

This is the first commandment.

And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

There is none other commandment greater than these.

Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets;

I come not to destroy but to fulfil.

Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not kill.

But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother, shall be in danger of the judgment.

Ye have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.

But I say unto you, Resist not him that is evil; but whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy.

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you.

All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them;

For this is the law and the prophets.

III

Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves,

For men will deliver you up to the councils, and scourge you in the synagogues.

Ye shall be brought before governors and kings, for my sake.

And ye shall be hated of all men, for my name's sake.

A man's foes shall be they of his own household.

But he that loveth his father or mother or brethren more than me, is not worthy of me.

For who is my mother? and who are my brethren?

Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul. Rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body.

For what is a man profited if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

He that taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.

He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

IV

Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them; but it shall not be so among you.

For whosoever shall be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever shall be chief among you, let him be your servant.

Except ye become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of God.

Whosoever shall humble himself as a little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of God.

Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones;

For inasmuch as ye do it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye do it unto me.

V

So unto you is given the mystery of the Kingdom of God.

If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

LOVE ONE ANOTHER

Paul

I

I beseech you, brethren, that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love,

Endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

For by one spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free.

There is one body and one spirit; one God and Father of all who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

Therefore let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamour and evil-speaking be put away with all malice;

Be ye kindly affectioned one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God hath forgiven you.

Let us love one another, for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

II

Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good.

Be kindly affectioned one to another, in brotherly love, in honour preferring one another.

Bless them which persecute you, bless and curse not.

Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath.

For it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.

Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head.

Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

III

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.

And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge and have not love, I am nothing.

And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing.

Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked,

Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

Love never faileth;

But whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

Now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

DEATH AND IMMORTALITY

SENECA

I

There is nothing that Nature has made necessary which is more easy than death. The parting of soul and body is but a moment's work.

What a shame is it, then, to stand in fear of anything so long, which is over so soon!

If it shall please God to add another day to our lives, let us thankfully receive it; but let us so compose ourselves to-night that we may have no anxious dependence upon to-morrow.

He that can say, I have lived this day, makes the next clear again.

It is as great a folly to fear death as to fear life; for he that would not die ought not to live, since death is the condition of life.

The fear of death is slavery, as the contempt of it is liberty.

II

Next to the encounter of death in our own bodies, the most sensible calamity is the death of a friend.

Yet this affliction, which by nature is grievous, is by virtue and providence made not unlovely.

He that has lost a friend has more cause of joy that he once had him, than of grief that he is taken away.

The comfort of having a friend may be taken away, but not that of having had one.

Let us therefore make the best of our friends while we have them, for how long we shall keep them is uncertain.

And let us not bury our friendship with our friends.

We do not mourn the absent; why then the dead, who are effectually no other?

For they are not gone, but are sent before.

III

This life is only a prelude to eternity, where we are to expect a new life, and another state of things.

We have no prospect of heaven here, but at a distance.

Let us therefore expect our last hour with courage — the last, I say, to our bodies but not to our minds.

The day which we fear as our last, is but the birthday of our eternity.

What we fear as a rock proves to be a harbour, in many cases to be desired, never to be refused.

What if death comes? If it stays not with us, why should we fear it?

That which we call death is but a pause or suspension; in truth, a progress into life.

Only our thoughts look downward upon the body, and not forward upon things to come.

A great soul takes no delight in staying with the body; it considers whence it came, and knows whither it is to go.

We should live in our bodies as if we were only to lodge in them this night, and to leave them tomorrow.

It is the care of a wise and a good man to look to his manners and actions, and rather how well he lives than how long.

For to die sooner or later is not the business, but to die well or ill; for death brings us to immortality.

SELF-CONTROL

Marcus Aurelius

I

It is sufficient for a man to apply himself wholly to the tendence of that spirit which is within him, and truly and really to serve it.

His service doth consist in this, that a man keep himself pure from all passion, from all rashness and vanity, and from all manner of discontent,

(That he be) a man without ever the least appearance of anger or any other passion; able at the same time most exactly to observe serenity, and yet to be most tender-hearted.

Do nothing at all but what reason shall, for the good and benefit of men, suggest unto thee.

Suppose that men kill thee, cut thee in pieces, curse thee,

What can these things do to prevent thy mind from remaining pure, wise, sober, just?

Let it be thy earnest and incessant care to perform whatsoever thou art about, with true and unfeigned gravity, natural affection, freedom and justice.

Let thy speech be always grave and modest.

Speak that which seemeth unto thee most just, only speak it kindly, modestly and without hypocrisy.

To keep within the compass of true moderation, is proper to a man who hath a perfect and invincible soul.

II

A man's soul doth wrong itself when it is overcome by any pleasure or pain.

Wheresoever thou mayest live, there it is in thy power to live well and happy.

He is a happy man who in his lifetime dealeth unto himself a happy lot and portion.

A happy lot and portion is good inclination of the soul, good desires, good actions.

To live happily is an inward power of the soul.

Every man's happiness depends from himself.

Upon all occasions of sorrow, remember henceforth to make use of this dogma — that whatsoever hath happened unto thee is in very deed not of itself a misfortune; but that to bear it generously, is certainly great happiness.

He liveth with the gods, who at all times affords unto them the spectacle of a soul both contented and well pleased with whatsoever is allotted unto it.

He keeps and preserves himself unspotted by pleasure, undaunted by pain.

If I will, it is in my power to keep out of this my soul all wickedness, all trouble and confusion;

To be cheerful and courageous in all sudden chances and accidents;

To love mildness and moderation and gravity,

To do my business thoroughly and without complaint.

The art of true living teaches a man, whatsoever falls upon him, that he may be ready for it and that nothing may cast him down.

III

Philosophy doth consist in this: — never to do anything rashly or hypocritically; all things that happen to embrace contentedly;

And above all things, with all meekness and a calm cheerfulness, to expect death.

Thou shalt go about every action as thy last, free from all vanity and from all hypocrisy and self-love and dislike of those things which have happened unto thee;

Not as though thou hadst thousands of years to live.

Death hangs over thee; whilst yet thou livest, whilst thou mayest, be good.

(Live as) one who for his words and actions neither needs an oath, nor any man to be a witness.

If it be not fitting, do it not; if it be not true, speak it not.

Do as one who, for aught thou knowest, may at this very present depart out of this life.

Thou must be like a promontory of the sea, against which though the waves beat continually, yet it stands,

And about it are those swelling waves stilled and quieted.

THE END